General Assembly

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Seventy-first session
Agenda item 19 (*g*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 2016

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/71/463/Add.7)*]

71/231. Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the mandate contained in its resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, by which it established the United Nations Environment Programme, and other relevant resolutions that reinforce its mandate, as well as the 1997 Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of the United Nations Environment Programme of 7 February 1997,[1] the Malmö Ministerial Declaration of 31 May 2000[2] and the Nusa Dua Declaration of 26 February 2010,[3]

Reaffirming also its commitment to strengthening the role of the United Nations Environment Programme as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment,

Recalling its resolutions 67/213 of 21 December 2012, 68/215 of 20 December 2013 and 69/223 of 19 December 2014,

Reaffirming the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development[4] and its principles,

Taking into account Agenda 21[5] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation),[6]

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[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/52/25), annex, decision 19/1, annex.

[2] Ibid., *Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/55/25), annex I, decision SS.VI/1, annex.

[3] Ibid., *Sixty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/65/25), annex I, decision SS.XI/9.

[4] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

[5] Ibid., annex II.

[6] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

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Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome[7] and the outcome document of the special event of the General Assembly to follow up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals,[8]

Recalling also the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building,[9]

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Welcoming the Paris Agreement[10] and its early entry into force, encouraging all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[11] that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible,

Taking note of the contribution of the United Nations Environment Assembly to addressing the challenge of, inter alia, climate change, within its mandate and in collaboration with other relevant organizations and stakeholders,

Committed to strengthening international environmental governance within the context of the institutional framework for sustainable development in order to promote a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development as well as coordination within the United Nations system,

Committed also to enhancing the voice of the United Nations Environment Programme and its ability to fulfil its coordination mandate within the United Nations system by strengthening its engagement in key United Nations coordination bodies and empowering it to lead efforts to formulate United Nations system-wide strategies on the environment,

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[7] Resolution 60/1.

[8] Resolution 68/6.

[9] UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex.

[10] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

[11] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

Reiterating the need for secure, stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for the United Nations Environment Programme, and, in accordance with resolution 2997 (XXVII), underlining the need to consider the adequate reflection of all the administrative and management costs of the Programme in the context of the United Nations regular budget,

Reaffirming the commitments, as contained in the ministerial outcome document of the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, held in Nairobi from 23 to 27 June 2014,[12] inter alia, to ensure the full integration of the environmental dimension, especially throughout the sustainable development agenda, acknowledging that a healthy environment is an essential requirement and key enabler for sustainable development,

Recalling the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held from 20 to 22 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, entitled "The future we want",[13] and noting the follow-up on paragraph 88, subparagraphs (*a*) to (*h*), of the outcome document, including through General Assembly resolution 67/213,

1. *Welcomes* the holding of the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme, in Nairobi, from 23 to 27 May 2016, and takes note of the report on the session and the resolutions and decisions contained therein;[14]

2. *Recognizes* the commitment of the United Nations Environment Assembly to contributing to the effective implementation of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[15] in an integrated manner, as reflected in its resolution 2/5 of 27 May 2016;[16]

3. *Encourages* the President of the United Nations Environment Assembly to convey the main messages agreed upon by the Environment Assembly at its sessions during the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, as appropriate, taking into account the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as General Assembly resolutions 67/290 of 9 July 2013 and 70/299 of 29 July 2016;

4. *Notes* the relevance of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme to the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, to be held in June 2017, and encourages its secretariat to provide the necessary inputs, as appropriate;

5. *Reiterates* that capacity-building and technology support to developing countries in environment-related fields are important components of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme, and in this regard calls for the continued and focused implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building[9] adopted by the Programme;

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[12] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/69/25), annex, resolution 1/1.

[13] Resolution 66/288, annex.

[14] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/71/25).

[15] Resolution 70/1.

[16] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-first Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/71/25), annex.

6. *Also reiterates* the continuing need for the United Nations Environment Programme to conduct up-to-date, comprehensive, scientifically based and policy-relevant global environmental assessments, in close consultation with Member States, in order to support decision-making processes at all levels;

7. *Notes* the request by the United Nations Environment Assembly to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to provide options to secure the participation of developing countries in the Environment Assembly;[17]

8. *Urges* all Member States and other stakeholders in a position to do so to increase voluntary funding to the United Nations Environment Programme, including to the Environment Fund, notes the need for continued efforts to broaden the donor base and mobilize resources from all sources, including stakeholders, and welcomes the increased support received in this regard;

9. *Takes note* of resolution 2/22 adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly on 27 May 2016 on the review of the cycle of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme,[16] in which it decided to hold its regular sessions in odd-numbered years commencing with its third session, in 2017, and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-third session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Report of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme", unless otherwise agreed.

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[17] Ibid., *Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/69/25), annex, resolution 1/15.

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Seventy-first session
Agenda item 19 (*h*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 2016

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/71/463/Add.8)*]

71/232. Harmony with Nature

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, [1] Agenda 21, [2] the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, [3] the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development [4] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation), [5]

Recalling the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled "The future we want", [6]

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3–14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

[2] Ibid., annex II.

[3] Resolution S-19/2, annex.

[4] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[5] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[6] Resolution 66/288, annex.

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Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Recalling its resolutions 64/196 of 21 December 2009, 65/164 of 20 December 2010, 66/204 of 22 December 2011, 67/214 of 21 December 2012, 68/216 of 20 December 2013, 69/224 of 19 December 2014 and 70/208 of 22 December 2015 on Harmony with Nature and its resolution 63/278 of 22 April 2009, by which it designated 22 April as International Mother Earth Day,

Recalling also the 1982 World Charter for Nature,[7]

Noting with appreciation the virtual dialogue on Harmony with Nature among, inter alia, experts on Earth jurisprudence, including the participation of those who have been active in the interactive dialogues of the General Assembly, held from 22 April to 22 June 2016 and hosted on the website on Harmony with Nature, to commemorate International Mother Earth Day and to inspire citizens and societies to reconsider how they interact with the natural world in order to implement the Sustainable Development Goals in harmony with nature, noting that some countries recognize the rights of nature in the context of the promotion of sustainable development,

Recognizing that planet Earth and its ecosystems are our home and that "Mother Earth" is a common expression in a number of countries and regions, noting that some countries recognize the rights of nature in the context of the promotion of sustainable development, and expressing the conviction that, in order to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations, it is necessary to promote harmony with nature,

Noting that, in promoting a holistic approach to achieving sustainable development in harmony with nature, Earth system science plays a significant role,

Expressing concern about documented environmental degradation, potentially more frequent and intense natural disasters and the negative impact on nature resulting from human activity, and recognizing the need to strengthen scientific knowledge on the effects of human activities on the Earth systems, with the aim of promoting and ensuring an equitable, balanced and sustainable relationship with the Earth,

Noting the Peoples' World Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth, hosted by the Plurinational State of Bolivia in Cochabamba from 20 to 22 April 2010,[8]

Recognizing that a number of countries consider Mother Earth the source of all life and nourishment and that these countries consider Mother Earth and humankind to be an indivisible, living community of interrelated and interdependent beings,

Noting that in recent years there have been many initiatives on sustainable development governance, including policy documents on living well in harmony with nature,

[7] Resolution 37/7, annex.

[8] See A/64/777, annexes I and II.

Taking note of the conceptual framework of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services,[9]

Recognizing that gross domestic product was not designed as an indicator for measuring environmental degradation resulting from human activity and the need to overcome this limitation with regard to sustainable development and the work carried out in this regard,

Recognizing also the uneven availability of basic statistical data under the three dimensions of sustainable development and the need to improve their quality and quantity,

Reaffirming that fundamental changes in the way societies produce and consume are indispensable for achieving global sustainable development and that all countries should promote sustainable consumption and production patterns, with the developed countries taking the lead and with all countries benefiting from the process, taking into account the Rio principles,

Recognizing that many ancient civilizations, indigenous peoples and indigenous cultures have a rich history of understanding the symbiotic connection between human beings and nature that fosters a mutually beneficial relationship,

Recognizing also that the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities can support social well-being and sustainable livelihoods and therefore contribute to global efforts and initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing further the work undertaken by civil society, academia and scientists with regard to signalling the precariousness of life on Earth, as well as their efforts, along with those of Governments and private sector organizations, to devise more sustainable models and methods for production and consumption,

Considering that sustainable development is a holistic concept that requires the strengthening of interdisciplinary linkages in the different branches of knowledge,

Stressing the importance of inclusiveness within the United Nations development system and that no one is left behind and no country is left behind in the implementation of the present resolution,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the experts' summary report of the first virtual dialogue of the General Assembly on Harmony with Nature among, inter alia, experts on Earth jurisprudence,[10] as well as of the hosting of the virtual dialogue, held from 22 April to 22 June 2016, on the website on Harmony with Nature;

2. *Invites* Member States to consider existing studies and, as appropriate, the findings and recommendations of the reports of the Secretary-General on Harmony with Nature,[11] of the experts' summary report of the virtual dialogue, addressing Earth jurisprudence, and of the interactive dialogues of the General Assembly on Harmony with Nature in the promotion of the balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development through harmony with nature;

[9] IPBES/2/17.

[10] See A/71/266.

[11] A/65/314, A/66/302, A/67/317, A/68/325 and Corr.1, A/69/322 and A/70/268.

3. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly to convene, at the seventy-first session of the Assembly, an interactive dialogue, to be held at the plenary meetings to be convened during the commemoration of International Mother Earth Day on 21 April 2017, with the participation of Member States, United Nations organizations, independent experts and other stakeholders, to discuss the recommendations of the experts' summary report, so as to inspire citizens and societies to reconsider how they interact with the natural world and to improve the ethical basis of the relationship between humankind and the Earth in the context of sustainable development;

4. *Decides* to continue observing International Mother Earth Day annually on 22 April, requests the Secretary-General to provide continuing support, and encourages Member States to observe the International Day at the national level;

5. *Takes note with appreciation* of the agreement between the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat,[12] invites Member States to contribute to the earmarked activities related to Harmony with Nature under the trust fund of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, aiming, inter alia, at the participation of independent experts in the interactive dialogues of the General Assembly on Harmony with Nature, and invites relevant stakeholders to contribute to the earmarked activities related to Harmony with Nature;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to use the website, maintained by the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, to gather information and contributions on ideas and activities to promote a holistic approach to sustainable development in harmony with nature and to advance the integration of interdisciplinary scientific work, including success stories on the use of traditional knowledge and on existing national legislation;

7. *Calls for* holistic and integrated approaches to sustainable development, in its three dimensions, that will guide humanity to live in harmony with nature and lead to efforts to restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystems;

8. *Invites* States, as appropriate:

(*a*) To further build up a knowledge network in order to advance a holistic conceptualization of sustainable development in its three dimensions to identify different economic approaches that reflect the drivers and values of living in harmony with nature, relying on current scientific information to achieve sustainable development, and to facilitate support for and recognition of the fundamental interconnections between humankind and nature;

(*b*) To promote harmony with the Earth, including as found in indigenous cultures, to learn from those cultures and to support and promote efforts being made from the national level down to the local community level to reflect the protection of nature;

9. *Encourages* all countries to develop and strengthen the quality and quantity of basic national statistical data on the three dimensions of sustainable development, and invites the international community and the pertinent bodies of

[12] Available from www.harmonywithnatureun.org/trustfund.html.

the United Nations system to assist the efforts of developing countries by providing capacity-building and technical support;

10. *Recognizes* the need for broader measures of progress to complement gross domestic product in order to better inform policy decisions, and in this regard notes the ongoing work of the Statistical Commission on a work programme to develop broader measures of progress and to conduct a technical review of existing efforts in this area;[13]

11. *Calls upon* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates and resources, to ensure that no one is left behind and no country is left behind in the implementation of the present resolution;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, at its seventy-second session, a report on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Harmony with Nature", unless otherwise agreed.

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21 December 2016

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[13] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2013, Supplement No. 4* (E/2013/24), chap. I, sect. C, decision 44/114.